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NEWS

Winchester town manager to leave post Sept. 3 after two decades of service

WILL DOWD | STAFF WRITER

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Winchester Town Manager Beth Rudolph, left, listens during the July 14 Select Board meeting where her resignation was officially announced. Board members Michael Bettencourt and Paras Bhayani are pictured at right. WINCHESTER NEWS/WINCAM PHOTO/WILL DOWD

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Town Manager Beth Rudolph will step down from her role Sept. 3, ending a 20-year tenure that began in the engineering office and culminated with

her leading the community through some of its most challenging periods.

Select Board Chair Michelle Prior announced Rudolph's departure during the July 14 board meeting, but as reported by the Winchester News, Rudolph had informed the board the previous week of her intention to leave.

"I would be remiss without acknowledging that Beth made us aware last week that she intends to move on," Prior said. "Her last day will be Wednesday, Sept. 3."

Rudolph's departure marks the end of an era for Winchester's municipal government. She joined the town in 2004 as assistant town engineer under Bob Conway, became town engineer in 2010, then served as interim town manager before being named permanent town manager in 2021.

During her tenure, Rudolph oversaw substantial completion of Winchester's multi-decade flood mitigation and stormwater work, the completion of numerous transportation projects including traffic calming and the Tri-Community Greenway.

Prior praised Rudolph's contributions while expressing the board's disappointment at her decision to leave.

"We're sad to see you go, Beth," Prior said during last Monday's meeting. "Thank you for continuing to write the reports and doing all the things between now and then. We're grateful for that."

In a letter to the Winchester News editor published Monday, the Select Board outlined Rudolph's extensive contributions and transition plans. The board noted that during Rudolph's tenure, "the town has delivered on a wide range of strategic priorities, notably in the realm of capital

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The letter praised Rudolph's leadership style, stating she "will be missed by the town's dedicated staff, whom she led with collegiality and energy."

Rudolph's path to town manager began in the engineering department, where she developed expertise in infrastructure projects ranging from storm water upgrades to road resurfacing. Her technical background proved invaluable as she helped shepherd multimillion-dollar capital plans through planning and implementation phases.

Her leadership role expanded dramatically in 2021 when former Town Manager Lisa Wong departed for South Hadley. The Select Board appointed Rudolph as acting town manager during a particularly challenging period marked by pandemic-related budget constraints and operational disruptions.

The board voted unanimously in December 2022 to remove the interim designation and name Rudolph permanent town manager.

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Rudolph received strong marks in her first formal performance review in March 2025, with board members praising her budgeting discipline, collaborative leadership style and organizational skills. The evaluation placed her compensation in the top tier of the town's pay scale.

Her tenure as town manager included overseeing the completion of the long-awaited Winchester Center train station project, which opened to commuters Monday after years of construction.

During the meeting, Rudolph delivered her regular manager's report, detailing ongoing construction projects including Muraco Eleme School improvements, Town Hall parking lot renovations and va

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projects. Her professional demeanor gave little indication of her impending departure.

The town manager position carries significant responsibilities in Winchester's government structure. The Select Board sets policy and tax rates while the town manager handles day-to-day operations including police, fire, public works and administrative services.

The Select Board has outlined detailed transition plans to ensure continuity of operations. According to their public letter, Rudolph will "remain in place until just after Labor Day" and will work with the board "on a careful transition."

During the transition period, the board stated that Rudolph, Select Board members and Winchester's veteran leadership team will implement interim plans covering "day-to-day management of the town, negotiations with town collective bargaining units, preparations ahead of Fall Town Meeting, and the continued work of the State of the Town Committee."

The board plans to "convene in both executive and regular sessions to organize itself to undertake a town manager search" and will "take a participatory approach that incorporates the feedback and views of a wide range of town constituents to ensure that the next town manager has the attributes, skills, and values that would make them a strong leader for Winchester going forward."

"We'll have Beth for a few more Select Board meetings," Prior noted.

Rudolph's departure comes during a busy period for municipal government. The town recently approved $10.95 million in bond anticipation notes for various infrastructure projects, addressed unexpended bond proceeds totaling more than $128,000 and adv multiple Community Preservation Act funding proposals.

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The timing also coincides with Winchester's planning for its 375th anniversary celebration, scheduled for September. Rudolph has been involved in coordination efforts for the milestone event.

Town officials have not indicated whether Rudolph has accepted another position or plans to remain in municipal government. Her resignation letter, according to board members, provided minimal details about her future plans.

The Select Board expects to address succession planning and interim management arrangements at upcoming meetings as the September deadline approaches.

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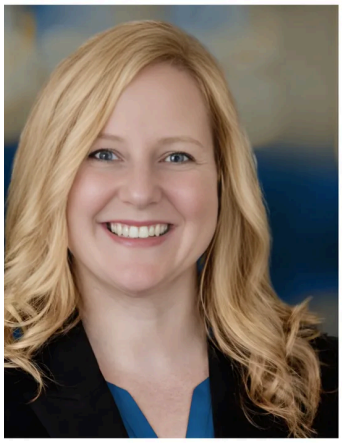

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'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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